

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /126 W

----- 127534

R 121408Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9803

INFO AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 2400

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PO

SUBJ: STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

1. RAPID, CONFUSED PERSONNEL TURNOVERS AND CONFLICTS OVER PROGRAMMING POLICY WITHIN GOVERNMENT-OWNED TELEVISION AGENCY (RTP) HAVE BEEN CHRONIC SINCE APRIL 25 MILITARY TAKEOVER. IN FIRST DAYS AFTER COUP NEWS AND FEATURE PROGRAMS TOOK ON REVOLUTIONARY COLORATION; OVER LAST COUPLE OF WEEKS, PROGRAMMING HAS BEEN ON MORE MODERATE KEEL.

2. EVENING OF JUNE 10 TV GAVE LIVE COVERAGE TO SATIRICAL SKIT PRESENTED AT SPRING FAIR. SKIT WAS RATHER GROSS PARODY OF OLD REGIME FIGURES. IN MIDDLE OF PARODY OF FORMER LISBON PATRIARCH CARDINAL CEREJEIRA (IN WHICH HE WAS MADE TO APPEAR HOMOSEXUAL) PROGRAM WAS INTERRUPTED WITH ANNOUNCEMENT THAT RTP HAD BEEN ORDERED BY JUNTA TO SUSPEND COVERAGE. SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT FEW MINUTES LATER SAID THAT DECISION HAD BEEN MADE BY JUNTA'S DELEGATE TO RTP, MAJOR MARIZ FERNANDES, AND CONFIRMED BY MINISTER OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS AND STRESSED THAT DECISION WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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"CONTRARY TO THE WILL OF THE WORKERS AT RTP". THIS REPEATED SEVERAL

TIMES. BEFORE GOING OFF AIR AT ABOUT 0100 RTP
BROADCASTER APPEALED FOR ALL RTP EMPLOYEES TO GO TO RTP
HEADQUARTERS AT ONCE FOR AN URGENT MEETING TO DISCUSS
INCIDENT.

3. MEETING REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE AND CULMINATED IN DEMAND
FOR OUSTER OF MARIZ FERNANDES AND GOP DELEGATE JULIO DE CASTRO CALDAS.

4. REAL ISSUE--AND A VERY IMPORTANT ONE--IS WHETHER
PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES WILL BE ABLE
TO FORCE THEIR WILL SO THAT TELEVISION DOES NOT BECOME
SIMPLE PROPAGANDA VEHICLE FOR FAR LEFT. GIVEN LEFT-WING
ORIENTATION OF MANY KEY MEMBERS OF RTP STAFF, IT WILL NOT
BE EASY TO ENSURE MODERATION IN PROGRAMMING WITHOUT DIRECT
MILITARY CONTROL OF RTP OR SOME FORM OF CENSORSHIP, OR
BOTH. IT NOTEWORTHY THAT THE TELEVISION DISPUTE MARKS
FIRST TIME MEMBER OF SACROSANCT ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT
(MARIZ FERNANDES IN THIS CASE) HAS DRAWN CRITICISM.
SCOTT

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NNN

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